

Diversification of crop farming in Wayne County is increasing, placing a lesser dependence on tobacco as the principal source of income. Severe weather conditions, unstable domestic and foreign government programs, decreasing farm labor and an all out attack on tobacco usage by the government makes the outlook for tobacco production less stable. This may tend to decrease tobacco values in the coming years. On the other hand, the world population is increasing much faster than food production. The resulting demand for food will tend to make food crops more valuable. Of course, there are few food processors now located in the county or area and consequently there are few contracts for these crops. Many farmers are now raising two crops of cucumbers per year on a contract basis with Mount Olive Pickle Company. If contracts for other types of vegetables were available and if there was loosening of the tight labor supply, many farmers would be willing to raise more food crops. The day will probably come when the return on food crops will be great enough for the farmers to pay higher wages for labor to harvest the food crop.

In addition to food crops, livestock and poultry production and related products play an increasingly important role in Wayne County's economy. Table 19 compares the 1961 and 1966 income from livestock. All categories show tremendous increases except broilers, which decreased slightly. This decrease in broiler production should be only temporary as there are four firms known to be interested in contracting and buying poultry. The reasons for the increases in livestock production and income are numerous. There are several meat packing companies in the county and the surrounding areas. Also, the increased yields of corn for grain has had an impact on livestock production. The demand for poultry, pork, and beef has risen substantially. Yet there is room to expand in every category of livestock production. Most farms contain land which is wet, hilly, odd shaped or not well adapted for row crops which would be usable for swine